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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KYIV 001837

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TAGS: PGOV PREL UP
SUBJECT: UKRAINE: MOROZ BLUFFING ON NEW RADA SESSION

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Classified By: Ambassador for reasons 1.4(b,d).

¶1. (C) Summary: The Ukrainian media was abuzz over the July 28-29 weekend with Rada Speaker Moroz's announcement that he would call an extraordinary Rada session July 31. Moroz said he was responding to a request from 179 deputies to hold the session, but Party of Regions leaders immediately responded publicly that they had no plans to participate. Deputy Head of the Presidential Secretariat Chaliy told Ambassador on July 30 that Regions was sticking to the May 27 agreement with the President. This a scheme we first heard about from BYuT MP Nemyria, who told Ambassador July 20 that BYuT defector Mykola Zamkovenko--now self-appointed head of the so-called "BYuT-2" faction in the Rada--was trying to convince other BYuT MPs to recant their resignations and rejoin parliament. Regions leaders had privately confirmed to us last week that the proposal for a new session had been floated, but that the party had decided to move ahead with elections. In addition, Regions' political council met July 30 to finalize its election list and leadership of the campaign headquarters; afterwards MP Mykhaylo Chechetov said the council had reaffirmed that Regions would not participate in another Rada session. Even the Communists have said they have not decided whether to go to the session.

¶2. (C) Comment: On the face of it, Moroz's announcement seems to be the attempt of a desperate man to forestall elections that will mean the end of his Speakership, if not his political career. It seems highly unlikely that Moroz was really able to collect 179 signatures--Socialists, Communists, and BYuT-2 together would only get him to about ¶75. Without a quorum, Moroz will not have his session. There may be some rank and file MPs in Regions willing to return to the session hall because their place on the party list is not secure, but we do not expect to Regions to attend even if Moroz goes ahead and convenes the session--the appearance of a large Regions contingent at a new session would signal that tensions among factions within the party were bubbling to the surface. End summary and comment.

Kluyev Holds Meeting on Whether to Call New Rada Session

¶3. (C) BYuT MP Hryhoriy Nemyria told Ambassador July 20 that they had information from three sources that Deputy Prime Minister Klyuyev held a meeting with Environment Minister Dzharty (Regions' campaign manager in 2006), Regions MP Sivkovych, First Deputy Speaker and Communist Martynuk, head of the Rada Secretariat Valentyn Zaichuk (a Moroz ally), and MP Zamkovenko, head of the breakaway "BYuT-2" faction of BYuT MPs who refused to resign. The purpose of the meeting, according to Nemyria, was to discuss whether to hold an extraordinary Rada session at the end of July and whether to

bring protesters into Kyiv to picket outside the Rada and the Central Election Commission. Part of this plan involved Zamkovenko trying to bring former BYuT allies on board to claim they had been coerced to resign and to demand the return of their seats. Nemyria even gave us a copy of the form letter being circulated among BYuT members that could be used to reclaim one's parliamentary mandate. At the end of the meeting, Klyuyev, Dzharty, and Sivkovych said Party of Regions would hold its own internal consultations on this plan.

Regions Leaders Say Elections Will Go Forward

¶4. (C) Ambassador raised this meeting with a number of Regions leaders the following week. When Dzharty was asked on July 24, the Minister smiled and said he knew why the Ambassador was asking. He added that Regions was going ahead with elections preparations. Faction leader Bohatyreva and deputy faction head Kolesnikov also told Ambassador on July 27 that Regions has decided that it did not want to participate in another Rada session.

¶5. (U) The public Regions response has been just as clear. Kolesnikov said that Regions will not participate and fellow deputy faction leader Chechetov said that Regions saw no reason to hold one, although he said they would reconvene if President Yushchenko asked them. Chechetov later came out and said Regions political council had met July 30 and confirmed that the party has no plans to attend a July 31 Rada session.

Others Still Pushing for the Session

¶6. (SBU) Ignoring Regions' comments, Moroz announced that the extraordinary session would discuss social security benefits, the legal basis for pre-term parliamentary

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elections, constitutional amendments, and other matters. Socialist MP Kuzmenko said that the session could start with the swearing in of new MPs who will replace the BYuT and OU MPs who resigned--another refusal by the Socialists to recognize the opposition's resignations. Zamkovenko told the press that, if there is a session, his group will participate. The Communists were more undecided, indicating that they might do whatever Regions does.

¶7. (U) Visit Embassy Kyiv's classified website:
www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kiev.
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